UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/666,004	09/17/2003	Juei-Mei Wang		6608

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EXAMINER
ALPERT, JAMES M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3624	

DATE MAILED: 12/06/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
Office Action Summary	10/666,004	WANG, JUEI-MEI	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	James Alpert	3624	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *16 September 2005*.

2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.   2b) ☐ This action is non-final.

3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) ☒ Claim(s) *1-8,10-11* is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) ☒ Claim(s) *1-8,10-11* is/are rejected.

7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a) ☐ All   b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:

      1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

The following communication is in response to Applicant's amendment and remarks filed on September 16, 2005. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Status of Claims

Claims 1,6,8 are currently amended. Claim 9 is canceled. Claims 2-5,7,10-11 are as originally submitted. Claims 1-11 are currently pending.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed September 16, 2005 have been fully considered but are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Land et al., U.S. Patent #6807533, in view of Wong, U.S. Patent #6115690, and further in view of Lee, U.S. Patent Application Publication #20030074289 and Whitehead, U.S. Patent Application Publication #20020199182. Claims 6-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Land in view of Benshemesh, U.S. Patent Application Publication #20030033216, and further in view of Lee and Whitehead. Claims 8-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wong in view of Lee and Whitehead.

With regard to Claim 1, Land teaches a system comprising:

a database server for storing accounts receivable data;
(Figure 2, item 36)

an application server that is electrically connected with the database server for accessing and processing data stored in the database server, the application server comprising: (Figure 2, item 40)

a data obtaining module for obtaining data from external systems,
(Figure 1, items 12 and 20, showing the server connected with an sales and inventory system)

an accounts receivable managing module for managing and updating the accounts receivable data stored in the database server, and
(Figure 6 and Col. 6 lines 6-20)

an account booking module for automatically generating accounting entries; and
(Figure 7 and Col. 6 lines 26-40)

a plurality of client computers electrically connected to the application server for downloading data from and uploading data to the database server.
(Figure 2, items 64-72)

Land does not specifically teach the following limitation:

a sales return managing module for managing accounting operations related to sales returns

However, Wong teaches this limitation at (Col. 20, lines 34-48), describing how sales returns can be automated with various other modules. The sales returns module is described thoroughly at Col. 29 line 23 and continuing until Col. 31 line 52. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time applicant's invention was made to modify the teachings of Land relating to an automated accounts receivable system to include the teachings of Wong relating to a sales returns subsystem. The motivation for such a modification is to diminish tasks that "are time-consuming and often take away resources of the corporation from its operations and other profitable activities," as described in Land at (Col. 1 lines 21-23).

Please consider the limitation on the following page:

a sales discount managing module for managing accounting operations related to sales discounts, wherein the sales discounts comprise different discount types and discount rates, and the sales discount managing module can automatically calculate a discount of each purchase order according to corresponding one or more discount types and/or discount rates.

The Lee reference at (Para. 37) teaches an automatic discount module for abating accounts receivable based on a cash discount. Further, it is old and well known that there are a variety of different types of discounts to an accounts receivable account, including early payment discounts, cash discounts, cross-product discounts, etc. Whitehead at (Paras. 55,79) teaches an accounts-receivable system that can adjust for many different discounts. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of Land, relating to an automated accounts receivable system to include the teachings of Lee and Whitehead relating to providing different types of discounts in an A/R system. The motivation for such a combination is found in Land at (Col. 10 lines 1-50) which discusses "cash variances, exchange gains/losses, discounts and concessions, etc." Land is suggesting the need to make adjustments to the every-day, typical price of goods and/or services.

Applicant also argues that entries to the general ledger, as taught by Land, are not "automatic." The examiner disagrees. As just an example, (Col. 7, lines 10-27) describes an automated system for updating the general ledgers of the customer-client. Further at (Col. 10, lines 39-41), Land describes "overnight" updating of the ledgers. The term automatic, interpreted broadly, can include any electronic system that eliminates functions "by hand." However, it appears that even a narrow interpretation of the term is anticipated by the Land reference.

With regard to Claim 2, Land teaches the system further comprising:

a data searching module for users to search the accounts receivable data and accounting entries data. (Col. 5 lines 58-60 and Col. 6 lines 62-65)

With regard to Claim 3, Land teaches the system further comprising:

a sales invoice managing module for managing sales invoices related to accounts receivable. (Col. 6 line 59 – Col. 7 line 27)

With regard to Claim 4, Land teaches the system wherein:

the application server electrically connects with a sales management system for accessing sales data stored in the sales management system and updating the accounts receivable data in the database server accordingly. (Figure 1 showing the AR server connected to the Order-Ship-Bill system; Figures 6,7; Col. 6 lines 6-41)

With regard to Claim 5, Land teaches the system wherein:

the application server electrically connects with an inventory management system for accessing delivery data stored in the inventory management system.
(Figures 6,7; Col. 6 lines 6-41)

With regard to Claim 6, the Land reference does not necessarily expressly

teach the following limitation:

retrieving advance payment data related to the purchase order according to the obtained purchase order data,

However, Benshemesh teaches this limitation at (Page 2, Para. 25) and it would

have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time applicant's invention was

made to modify the teachings of Land, relating to an automated accounts receivable

system, to include the teachings of Benshemesh, relating to retrieving advanced

payment data. The motivation for such a modification is to diminish tasks that "are time-

consuming and often take away resources of the corporation from its operations and

other profitable activities," as described in Land at (Col. 1 lines 21-23). Land further

teaches the other limitations:

obtaining a delivery message showing that the purchase order is fulfilled;
(Figure 10, item 430; Col. 9 lines 10-11)

calculating an account receivable of the purchase order;
(Figure 10, item 436; Col. 9 lines 25-28)

generating a sales invoice of the purchase order according to the calculated account
receivable and the advance payment data; and
(Figure 10, item 432; Col. 9 lines 9-14)

generating one or more accounting entries automatically according to the calculated
account receivable and the advance payment data.
(Figure 10, item 462; Col. 9 lines 25-28)

Please consider the following limitation:

calculating a sales discount according to one or more discount terms recorded in the
purchase order, wherein the sales discounts comprise different discount types and
discount rates;

The Lee reference at (Para. 37) teaches an automatic discount module for

abating accounts receivable based on a cash discount. Further, it is old and well known

that there are a variety of different types of discounts to an accounts receivable account,

including early payment discounts, cash discounts, cross-product discounts, etc.

Whitehead at (Paras. 55,79) teaches an accounts-receivable system that can adjust for

many different discounts. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to

combine the teachings of Land, relating to an automated accounts receivable system to

include the teachings of Lee and Whitehead relating to providing different types of

discounts in an A/R system. The motivation for such a combination is found in Land at

(Col. 10 lines 1-50) which discusses "cash variances, exchange gains/losses, discounts

and concessions, etc." Land is suggesting the need to make adjustments to the every-

day, typical price of goods and/or services.

Applicant also argues that entries to the general ledger, as taught by Land, are

not "automatic." The examiner disagrees. As just an example, (Col. 7, lines 10-27)

describes an automated system for updating the general ledgers of the customer-client.

Further at (Col. 10, lines 39-41), Land describes "overnight" updating of the ledgers.

The term automatic, interpreted broadly, can include any electronic system that

eliminates functions "by hand." However, it appears that even a narrow interpretation of

the term is anticipated by the Land reference.

With regard to Claim 7, Land teaches a method further comprising:

generating an invoice according to the retrieved advance payment data.
(Col. 9 line 17-24; Col. 10 lines 24-41, each describing other payment terms than simple
credit on accounts receivable)

With regard to claim 8, Wong teaches a method comprising:

confirming fulfillment of a purchase order released by a customer according to a
delivery message related to the purchase order;
(Col. 17 lines 17-20)

determining whether a sales return has occurred on the purchase order;
(Col. 46 lines 49-66; Col. 49 lines 23-32)

canceling one or more sales invoices related to the purchase order if the customer has
not accepted the alternative arrangements;
(Col. 29 lines 23-52)

balancing one or more accounts receivable related to the purchase order; and
(Col. 29 line 58 – Col. 30 line 9)

generating accounting entries for the sales return automatically.
(Col. 29 line 58 – Col. 30 line 9)

With regard to the following limitations:

determining whether the customer has accepted an alternative arrangement for the purchase order if a sales return has occurred, and

reconfirming fulfillment of the purchase order if the customer has accepted the alternative arrangement;

In the previous office action, the examiner took Official Notice that the idea of offering a customer an alternative to a return, such as an exchange for present or future merchandise is old and well known in the art, and that it would have been obvious to modify the Wong reference to include such facts. MPEP § 2144.03(C) states, in respect to an Examiner's use of Official Notice:

> To adequately traverse such a finding, an applicant must specifically point out the supposed errors in the examiner's action, which would include stating why the noticed fact is not considered to be common knowledge or well-known in the art. See 37 CFR 1.111(b).

The same section continues:

> If applicant does not traverse the examiner's assertion of official notice or applicant's traverse is not adequate, the examiner should clearly indicate in the next Office action that the common knowledge or well-known in the art statement is taken to be admitted prior art because applicant either failed to traverse the examiner's assertion of official notice or that the traverse was inadequate. If the traverse was inadequate, the examiner should include an explanation as to why it was inadequate.

Applicant has not traversed the noticed facts in Claim 8. The Examiner is now obligated to consider as admitted prior art, the elements of Claims 8 relating to alternative arrangement.

Please consider the following limitation:

calculating a sales discount according to one or more discount terms recorded in the purchase order, wherein the sales discounts comprise different discount types and discount rates;

The Lee reference at (Para. 37) teaches an automatic discount module for abating accounts receivable based on a cash discount. Further, it is old and well known

that there are a variety of different types of discounts to an accounts receivable account, including early payment discounts, cash discounts, cross-product discounts, etc. Whitehead at (Paras. 55,79) teaches an accounts-receivable system that can adjust for many different discounts. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of Wong, relating to an automated web commerce system with an accounts receivable subsystem and sales return module, to include the teachings of Lee and Whitehead relating to providing different types of discounts in an A/R system. The motivation for such a combination is provide a simple mechanism for making adjustments to the every-day, typical price of goods and/or services that will increase the ease of use for system users.

With regard to Claim 10, Wong teaches the method further comprising:

generating a sales return certificate for the purchase order.
(Col. 29 lines 23-39).

With regard to Claim 11, Wong teaches the method further comprising:

the delivery message is obtained from an inventory management system.
(Col. 26 lines 33-45).

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not

mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James Alpert whose telephone number is (571) 272-6738. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:30-6:00. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vincent Millin can be reached on (571) 272-6747. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197.

James M. Alpert
November 17, 2005

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